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Volume 77 • Issue 5 • June/July 2021



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2021 Nebraska Cattlemen Midyear Meeting

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Visit https://nebraskacattlemen.org/ resources/events/nebraska-cattlemenmidyear-meeting/ for more details.

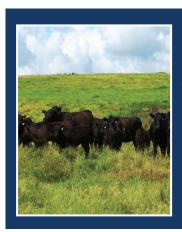
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Cows with their growing calves at side in a central Nebraska pasture. *Photo courtesy of Micky Burch.*



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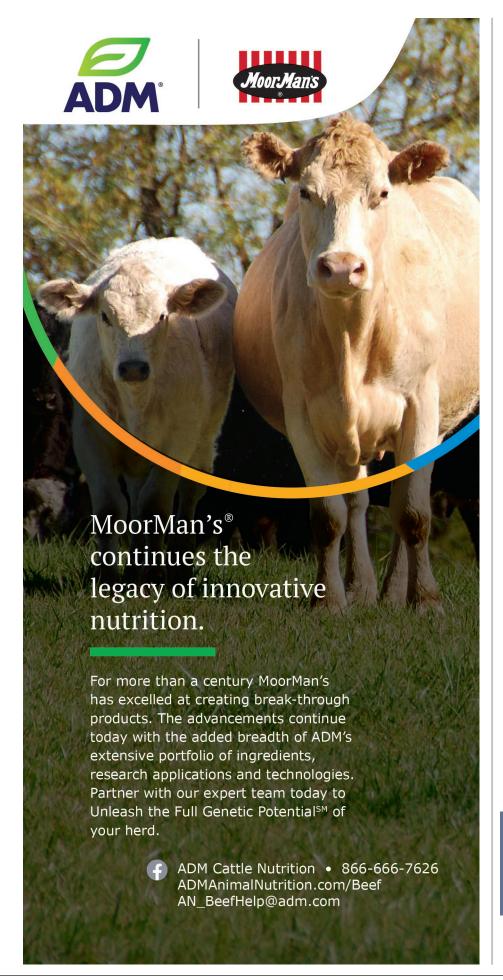


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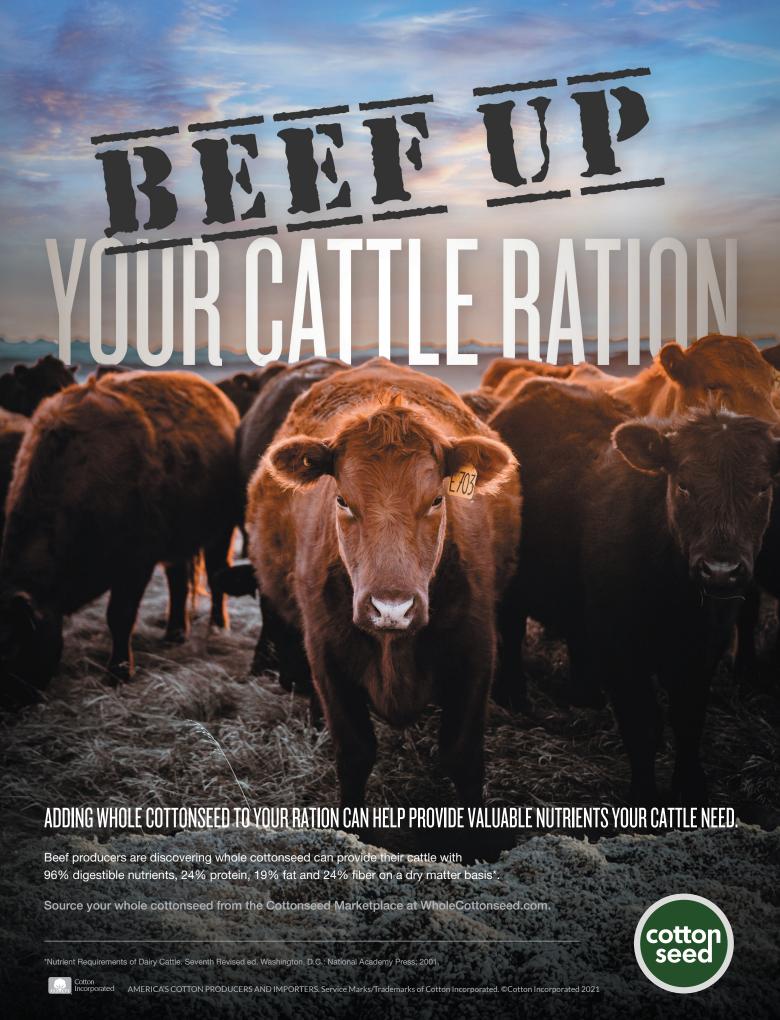
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By Scott Langemeier, Stromsburg Animal Health & Nutrition Committee Chairman

LB252 'Dr. Fox Bill' **Passes Unopposed**



egislative Bill (LB) 252, a bill that was written by and for Nebraska Cattlemen, ■advanced from final reading unopposed and was sent to Gov. Pete Ricketts' office. He signed the bill on April 14, 2021, witnessed by Jeff Fox's wife, Rhonda, and many cattle industry leaders. The bill was truly a team-oriented, grassroots effort as it was authored by Ashley Kohls and edited by Melody Benjamin and the Nebraska Cattlemen Animal Health and Nutrition Committee. It was designated as a priority bill by Nebraska Cattlemen and was introduced into the Nebraska Legislature by Sen. Matt Williams representing District 36. Thanks to the many other livestock organizations in the state who also supported the bill.

The bill was named by Nebraska Cattlemen in honor of Dr. Jeffrie Fox, a consulting veterinarian in Nebraska and a past chairman of the Nebraska Cattlemen Animal Health and Nutrition Committee. Dr. Fox passed away unexpectantly in November 2020 at the age of 49, leaving behind a wonderful family and many clients in Nebraska and the surrounding states.

The passing of LB252 ensures a producer's current prescriptions remain in place for 30 days after the death of a veterinarian, giving them time to interview and select a new member of their management team.

Prior to the passage of this bill, when a practicing Nebraska veterinarian passed, the prescriptions he/she had written for their clients were instantly null and void. This caused a problem because livestock operations need these prescriptions to buy medications to ensure consistent and uninterrupted health and well-being of their livestock.

In the last several years, the government, spurred on by consumer advocacy groups, has insisted on closer scrutiny of the use of antibiotics and animal health products because of the baseless fear of human antibiotic resistance resulting from eating meat from animals that have been fed antibiotics. Therefore, they have insisted on a closer working relationship between producers and veterinarians.

Evolution of the Consulting Veterinarian

Years ago, producers bought most of their animal health products from their local veterinary clinic. This association linked the veterinarian to the health products. As the size of operations – and specifically feedlots – grew, this gave birth to a new industry of drug packaging and distribution directly to a feedlot, bypassing the local veterinary clinic. Born was Micro Chemical, Lextron and many other distributors.

Because producers still needed a prescription to buy the drugs, these distributers hired veterinarians to write these prescriptions sight-unseen. As you can imagine, things got out of hand quicky. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) intervened and said that, in order to write a prescription, the veterinarian had to have a working relationship with the producer. Thus, the popularization of the independent consulting veterinarian and the decoupling of the veterinarian and the health products ensued. These individuals specialized in feedlot health and **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Pink Eye Protocols

By Micky Burch, Nebraska Cattleman Assistant Editor

Producers Have Numerous Options When It Comes to Pink Eye Prevention and Treatment

or many producers across the Cornhusker state, it has been a heck of a spring. After parts of the country experienced a polar vortex in February and a late-spring blizzard in March, many beef producers were elated to get their cattle out to grass. With some sunshine and a renewed perspective, producers may be turning their attention to disease control, including being on the lookout for pink eye.

"It's difficult because it's different from year to year," says Cori Stava, DVM, Cross Creek Animal Health Center, Staplehurst.

Prevention is key, and there are numerous ways producers can avoid the prevalence of pink eye, including pourons, sprays and rubs; fly tags; and even immediate-release and programmed-release implants. Many producers, however, have found vaccination and feeding an insect growth regulator

(IGR) mineral to be extremely effective prevention methods.

In Stava's experience, the best preventative for pink eye is vaccination. For a little more than \$1 per dose, beef producers can vaccinate with a commercial pink eye vaccine that specifically targets the *Moraxella bovis* bacteria, which has historically been identified as the primary agent of infectious bovine keratoconjunctivitis (IBK) – aka, pink eye.

"Moraxella bovis is the only strain found in a commercial vaccine product, though several variants of the strain can be found in the vaccine," Stava explains.

However, in recent years, practitioners like Stava have had increased difficulty in preventing and treating pink eye because the multiple-strain variations of the bacteria are constantly mutating.

"In my experience, the most common strain lately has been *Moraxella bovoculi*," Stava points out. "That's the reason I prefer the autogenous vaccine," she says, in comparison to the commercial vaccine.

An autogenous vaccine is a killed bacterin created from the disease-causing organisms. Stava produced her own autogenous pink eye vaccine by swabbing the eyes of multiple cattle with pink eye symptoms in her service area, creating a unique population. Those samples were then sent to a lab where the bacteria were cultured, or grown, and then utilized to develop a vaccine to help build immunity within the specific population.

Stava's vaccine targets Moraxella bovis, Moraxella bovoculi and Mycoplasma bovoculi. Mycoplasma is a bacteria without a cell wall. "Many antibiotics, such as penicillin, cephalosporin and any antibiotics derived from them are only effective against bacteria with a cell wall," she explains. "There are some approved injectable antibiotics to treat Mycoplasma; however, it's difficult to get high enough tissue concentrations to eliminate Mycoplasma, which is why treatment results are variable."

At a cost closer to \$2 per dose, label instructions for the autogenous vaccine call for 2 ml to be administered subcutaneously, followed by a booster dose of the same amount two to four weeks later for calves. For adult cattle that have already received that vaccination protocol and have built up some immunity compared to younger cattle, Stava recommends a single-dose vaccination annually.

Another way to practice pink eye prevention is through a complete mineral program that includes an insect growth regulator (IGR). Travis Schauda, district sales manager for Vitalix Inc., explains that fly control is one of the most effective ways to prevent pink eye.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Cori Stava, DVM, reviews the label on a bottle of pink eye vaccine at her clinic in Staplehurst.







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"Anytime you reduce the fly population, you are going to reduce pink eye," he states. "With fewer flies in your herd, the risk from pink eye goes significantly down."

IGR is a supplemental ingredient that prevents adult horn fly emergence from the manure of treated cattle. Existing adult horn flies aren't affected by IGR, so Schauda recommends starting feeding before horn flies appear.

"Preferably, producers should start feeding IGR the week of the last Nebraska frost," Schauda advises, though he points out that that time of year can be hard to predict. As an alternative rule of thumb, he suggests starting to feed IGR at least a week before cattle go to summer grass and stay on it until the second frost in the fall when the weather is consistently cold enough to mark the end of the horn fly season.

Compared to a base mineral and depending on the inclusion rate of IGR, producers can expect to pay anywhere from \$100 to \$165 per ton more for mineral tubs that include IGR. Schauda

always recommends producers follow label directions when feeding mineral, though most allow free choice to cattle.

Even with protocols in place, complete prevention of pink eye isn't guaranteed. Early symptoms of pink eye include watery eyes, or an animal constantly closing its eyes or avoiding bright sunlight. As the disease progresses, the eye can become cloudy or white as the infection, an ulcer, spreads across the cornea. In the most extreme cases, the ulcer can penetrate completely through the cornea, resulting in the iris protruding through the ulcer.

In the event an animal needs treatment, time is of the essence as early treatment can likely save the eye. Stava recommends treatment with a longacting oxytetracycline, like LA 200. In severe cases, Stava will treat with tulathromycin (Draxxin) and, as a last resort, may suture the eye shut.

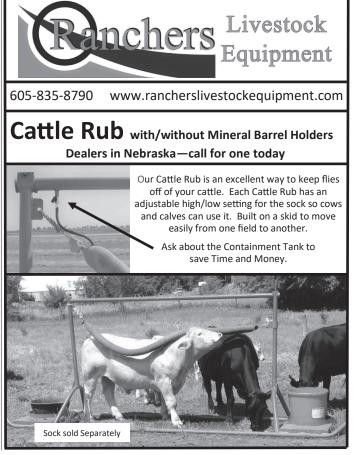
If a producer is having issues with pink eye, a check of the environment to see what may be causing the distress is good idea – things like flies, plant material and excessive dust or sunlight could be possible irritants.

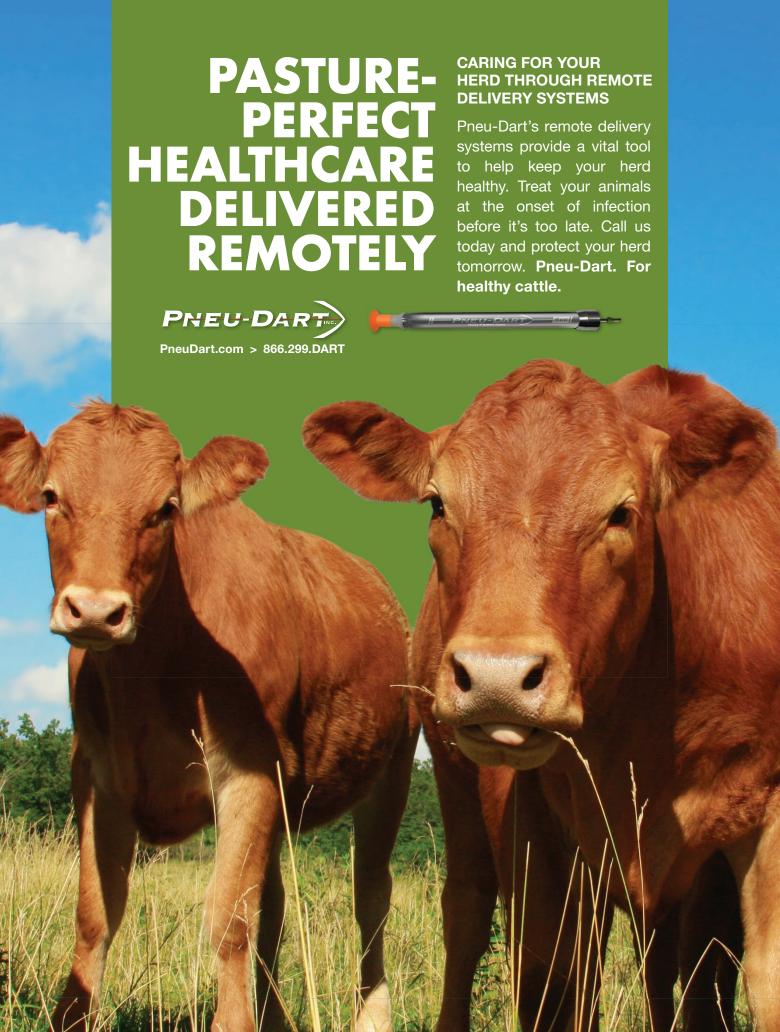
"The more horn flies a cow has, the more stress she has, the higher her heart rate is," Schauda reminds producers. "When her heart rate goes up, that female may require more feed and water, her milk production may go down and her estrus cycle may not be as strong."

Highly contagious, pink eye is easily spread when one animal comes into contact with the infected secretions of another animal. Flies can carry the *Moraxella bovis* bacteria for up to three days, spreading it from animal to animal. In individuals or whole herds, infection can result in decreased weight gain, low milk production and high treatment costs.

Working with a veterinarian and/or nutritionist in your area to establish a prevention plan and contingency plan for treatment is a producer's best bet to combat pink eye this summer and every year.







Managing Early Weaned Calves

By Karla Wilke, Ph.D., Cow-Calf, Stocker Management Specialist, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

arly weaning is typically defined as weaning before calves are 150 days of age. In extreme cases, beef calves may be weaned at 45 days of age, but more commonly, earlyweaned calves are more than 90 days of age. Early weaning may be advantageous in times of drought, when cows are in a confinement system, or as a body condition management tool for very young or old cows. Once weaning has occurred, the cow, now without the demands of lactation, can be maintained on poor-quality forage and little to no supplement. Higher quality feed, which may be in limited supply, can be reserved for the rapidly growing calf.

Nutrition

Milk is a great source of nutrition for the young calf. With the removal of milk in the diet through weaning, another source of high-quality nutrition needs to be provided if the same level of daily gain is desired. Although young beef calves begin eating solid food by 30 days of age, the rumen is still small. Therefore, a nutrient-dense, highly digestible diet with a fast passage rate will allow the calf to consume, digest

and absorb the nutrients needed. Diets containing residues or low-quality hay, which are often poorly digested, slow the rate of passage through the digestive tract and limit intake, which in turn can limit gain. A mature cow has a large rumen and has the potential to consume enough low-quality feed to meet her needs, in most cases. A young calf needs to be able to eat small meals frequently, as the rumen is so much smaller.

Because milk bypasses the rumen and goes straight to the abomasum via closure of the esophageal groove, it is a very digestible source of protein and energy, available to the animal for bone and muscle growth, as opposed to being available as a nitrogen source for the microbial population in the rumen. Supplementing a protein source that is not easily digested by the microbes and is then available at the tissue level can help support gain without the calves depositing fat instead of lean growth. Distiller's grains, a byproduct of the ethanol industry, is an example of a protein supplement that is a good source of rumen undegradable protein for the young, growing calf.

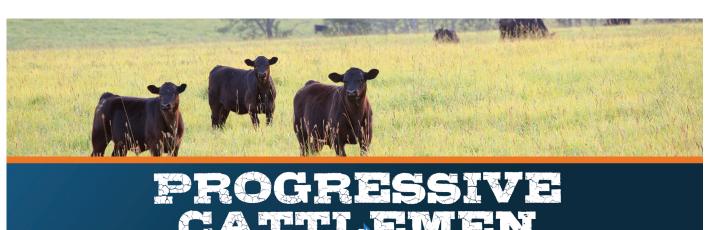
An example diet for a 300-pound calf that would support 2 pounds per day gain would be 3 pounds of dried distiller's and 7 pounds of a 50:50 blend of oat hay and alfalfa. Zinc and copper are very important minerals for boosting immunity, so providing a good vitamin and trace mineral package free choice or in a total mixed ration is important to the young calf as well. Water is also important for the health and well-being of the calf and should be clean and accessible at all times.

Management

Providing at least 12 inches of bunk or feeding space per calf allows all the calves access to feed without over-crowding. The early weaned calf is likely smaller than traditionally weaned calves, so making sure the calf can reach the feed in the bunk is critical. This is also true of the water tank. Making sure the tank is banked well, and the tank fills to the edge quickly so calves always have reachable water is critically important. After weaning, the goal is to increase feed intake as quickly as possible. However, without adequate

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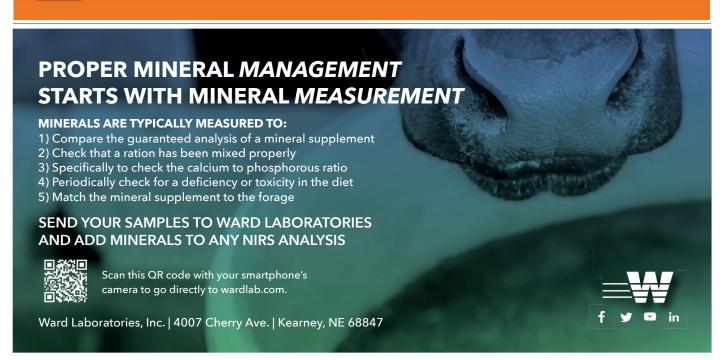




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water access, this process is delayed, as is nutrient intake, which can lead to depressed immunity and growth.

Determining that the pen and bunk line will effectively contain bawling, pacing, lightweight calves before weaning will alleviate some headaches later. A pen that traditionally holds 500- to 700-pound calves may not contain

a 300-pound calf as well. Fence-line weaning, where cows are on one side and calves are on the other, may also be a bit more challenging with the smaller calf who may be able to crawl through the fence.

Space to spread out in a clean pen can also help prevent post-weaning illness. Producers should also visit with their

local veterinarian about vaccination schedules and protocols that would be most effective for the early weaned calf as well as develop a protocol for treating illness if it occurs, well before weaning takes place.

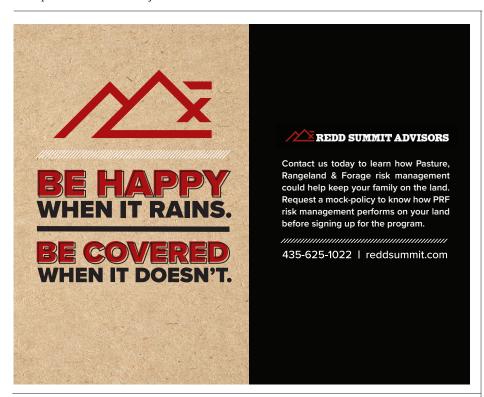
Marketing

Even with a price slide for lighter weight calves, the early weaned calf will usually not bring as much as a calf at a traditional weaning weight. Fortunately, these young calves are very efficient and, with proper nutrition, can gain as well or better than calves left to nurse the cow. Evaluating the cost of feed and the predicted value of the calf are critical, especially if early weaning is due to drought, as harvested feed resources are typically expensive in those situations.

Once weaned, these calves may fit well in an annual forage-grazing backgrounding program. Additionally, after a short growing period (approximately 90 days) these calves may be put on a finishing diet. They traditionally are very efficient during the finishing phase and have a high percentage of upper two-thirds Choice carcasses. However, as stated earlier, feed and labor costs should be evaluated against the predicted value of the calves at each marketing point.

Early weaning is a strategy that can be advantageous in several scenarios. Feeding, management and marketing need to be evaluated prior to weaning so the best options, as well as best management practices, are selected.

For more information about early weaning calves, producers can access "NebGuide G2O47 Management of Early Weaned Calves" at https://extension-publications.unl.edu/assets/pdf/g2O47. pdf or "NebGuide G2O57 Management, Health, and Nutritional Considerations for Weaned Calves" at https://extension-publications.unl.edu/assets/pdf/g2O57. pdf. These can also be found at https://extensionpubs.unl.edu.





NC Events

Affiliate Events

Nebraska Cattlemen affiliates are back in full swing hosting events. If you are not active in your affiliate, we encourage you to attend a meeting; this is your chance to get updates from Nebraska Cattlemen leadership and to share with staff how we can put your membership to work for you.

The NC member services team hopes to see you at these meetings:

- June 13: Northeast Nebraska Cattlemen Steak Fry, Wayne
- June 18: West Central Golf and Meeting, Broken Bow
- June 21: Sandhills Affiliate Golf and Meeting, Mullen
- June 24: Cuming County Feeders Golf Tournament, Beemer
- June 26: Burt County Cattlemen Beef Bash, Oakland

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Is Your Manure Lagoon Employee Safe?

By Aaron M. Yoder, Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health, University of Nebraska Medical Center

tructures for storing manure are necessary on nearly all livestock feeding operations. They provide a way to contain and even treat manure during times when land application of manure is not feasible.

As organic matter in manure decomposes, gases are produced that can be harmful or even fatal to humans and animals. These include ammonia, carbon dioxide, methane and hydrogen sulfide. While mechanical and natural ventilation do much to dilute these harmful gases, dangerous conditions can exist in and around manure storages.

Taking time to understand, assess and address potential risks is critical to avoid unnecessary injuries or loss of lives among workers and animals.

For open storages like lagoons or other in-ground storage basins, drowning is a major risk. Fencing and signage to limit access to these types of storage, signage to deter entry without proper equipment and training are simple, yet effective, methods to improve safety. Accessibility to a life preserver or rescue rope is highly recommended.

Air quality around lagoons can also be an issue. Gasses including hydrogen sulfide, ammonia, methane and carbon dioxide can accumulate around lagoons.

Hydrogen sulfide, with its characteristic "rotten egg" smell, is arguably the most dangerous gas that can accumulate in an area of stored manure. Because it is heavier than air, it can collect in the low areas around a structure

and in areas where air movement is not sufficient.

Hydrogen sulfide is released in greater quantities when lagoons are agitated, therefore special attention needs to be paid during this time. At low concentrations, hydrogen sulfide causes paralysis of nerve cells in the nose, deadening the sense of smell. At 500 parts per million, rapid loss of consciousness occurs and death can follow within minutes.

Even brief exposure to high concentrations of hydrogen sulfide can result in reactions that occur within 24 hours. Symptoms include buildup of fluid in the lungs, which may lead to death. Other long-term neurological effects are also possible.

Ammonia has a sharp and distinct odor that is often irritating to the nose, eyes and throat. While it can be deadly at high concentrations (1,000 parts per million or greater), most people will leave the area of ammonia accumulation to seek relief before being exposed to dangerous levels.

Methane is an odorless gas that is lighter than air. The most prevalent safety risk associated with methane is combustion. Explosions or flash fires are of greatest concern where manure is covered or contained without sufficient ventilation to dilute and remove methane.

Carbon dioxide is also odorless and heavier than air. Like hydrogen sulfide, it can accumulate in low-lying and stagnant areas in and around storages. The greatest risk associated with carbon dioxide is asphyxiation (suffocation) when it displaces oxygen in the air.

Even moderate concentrations can lead to shortness of breath and dizziness.

The best way to detect the presence of these gasses is with handheld or wearable gas monitors. They are available at a range of prices from \$150 to more than \$1,000, depending on your needs.

Adopting and using a "Safety Hierarchy" also greatly reduces potential for these types of events.

- 1. Eliminate the hazard whenever possible
- 2. Ensure that all possible safeguards are in place: ventilation, guards, fencing and gas sensors.
- 3. Use clear warning signs and labels in areas of danger.
- Complete training regarding the dangers of handling manure, appropriate response to an event and effective procedures to help limit negative consequences.
- 5. Always use required protective equipment.

Personal protective equipment required to safely work around stored manure includes:

- 1. A second person standing by outside the enclosed area.
- 2. Ventilation whenever possible.
- A self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) if entering an area with poor air quality.
- 4. Harness that can be used to help rescue a person who is overcome while in the storage facility.
- 5. Hydrogen sulfide gas monitor.

More safety and health training materials can be found at: https://www.unmc.edu/publichealth/feedyard/. • NG •

Free Safety Training Resources for Cattle Workers (English and Spanish)

- Agricultural Tailgate Trainings
- Animal Care Training
- Feedlot Flickr Photo Gallery
- Feedyard Safety Roundtable Summary
- National Ag Safety Database
- Safe Cattle Processing & Handling
- UNL Feedlot Worker Safety webinar
- Ag Safety and Health YouTube Channel



www.unmc.edu/publichealth/feedyard/resources/

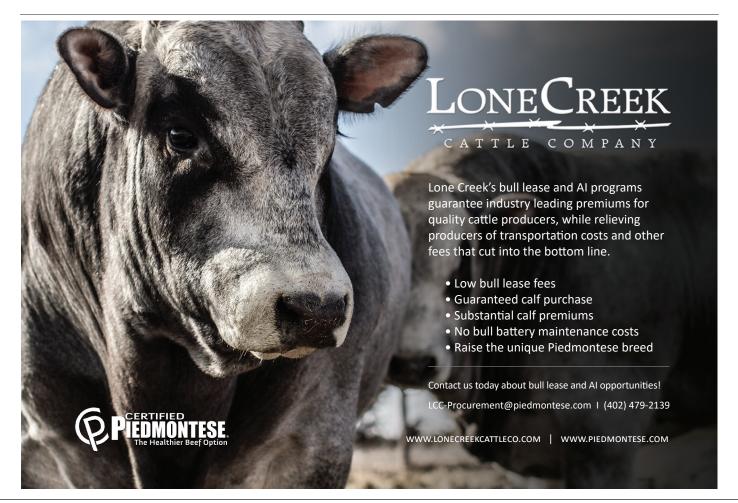
Contact us with your training needs: agcenter@unmc.edu

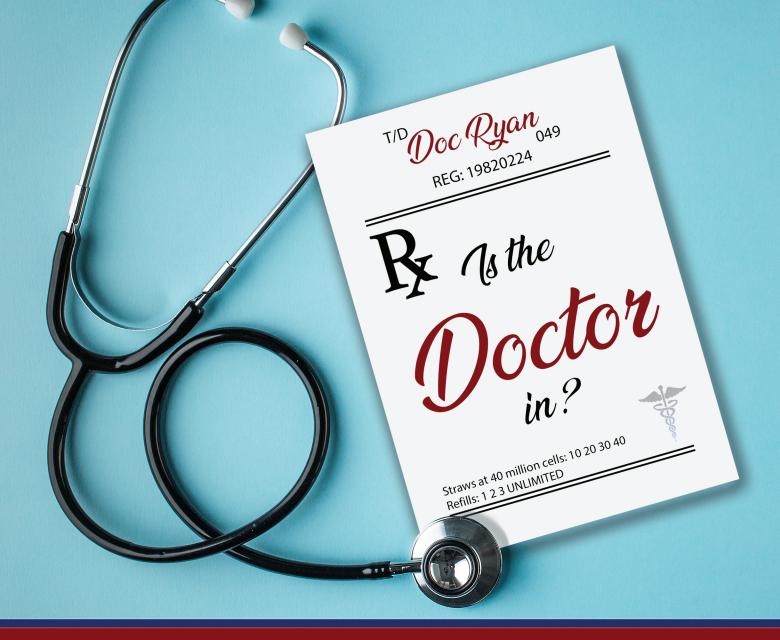










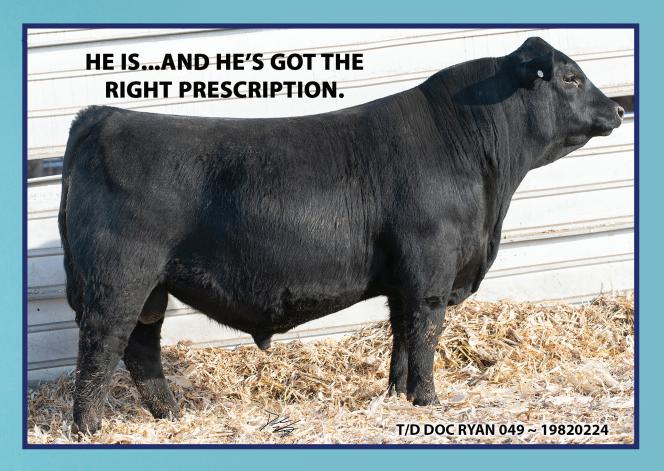


"Doc Ryan has every reason to be considered one of

The right prescription for a successful cow herd is found in its ability to leave a lasting LEGACY on the beef business. The Ruby of Tiffanys have left that kind of legacy. In our search for genetics that will STAND THE TEST OF TIME, like the aging of a fine wine, we set out to find an individual to enhance our herd with economic traits that are essential to the success of the beef industry. Doc Ryan is that bull, and he represents eight generations of BREEDING STRATEGY with one mission—to make the next generation profitable through all segments of the industry. Doc Ryan has it all—calving ease, performance, phenotype, and carcass traits. That's what makes him so special. HE IS JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED!

"When Trey and Dayna Wasserburger of T/D ANGUS at Rishel Ranch make breeding decisions, they revolve around the mantra 'Most of the Best.' Doc Ryan is the epitome of that. **There's never been a beast this good to come out of this breeding program!** The story of Doc Ryan began eight generations ago with Tiffany of BR. Born in 1982, with the beauty of a fine gem, she became the foundation matron of all Ruby of Tiffanys in the Angus breed. Seven Ruby of Tiffanys later, an amazing two-year-old, T/D Ruby of Tiffany 824, produced **THE BULL** of a generation."

~ Bill Rishel, Master Angus Breeder



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Development of the Beef Industry Long Range Plan



Il of us make major decisions in our lives that are not defined by a document, but greatly impact our futures. Most of us make those decisions after considering all accessible information, and then we chart a course of action that we believe will be of greatest benefit to us as we go forward with our lives. When it comes to businesses

or organizations like your state and national cattle associations, it becomes paramount to have defined goals that are important to our industry's long-term financial viability. In terms of goals for the beef industry, the No. 1 priority for long-term financial stability is consumer demand for our product. While that sounds simple enough, it is

2021-2025

CS-I: Drive Growth in Beef Exports

- Grow U.S. beef exports to 17% of U.S. beef production by 2025.
- Grow the value of U.S. beef exports as a percent of total beef value to 21% by 2025.
- By 2025, 75% of all cattle-producing states are participating in a nationwide animal disease traceability program (e.g. U.S. CattleTrace).

CS-II: Grow Consumer Trust in Beef Production

 Improve consumer trust index by five percentage points by 2025.

INDUSTRY LONG RANGE PLAN Core Strategies (CS)

 Grow Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certifications by a cumulative total of 10% per year and achieve national standardization of the BQA program by 2023.

CS-III: Develop and Implement Better Business Models to Improve Price Discovery and Value Distribution Across All Segments

- Maintain a beef cow herd of 30 to 31 million with a growth target of 32 to 32.5 million head.
- Grow packing capacity by 7% (7,000 head per day) by 2025.
- By 2023, identify and develop margin analysis indices/metrics that measure and track margin distributions to increase understanding of distributions from the cow-calf through the packing sectors.

CS-IV: Promote and Capitalize on the Multiple Advantages of Beef

- By 2025, achieve a wholesale beef demand index of 124.
- By 2025, narrow the perception gap between beef and chicken by at least 5 percentage points as measured by the Checkoff-funded Beef Tracker.
- By 2025, increase beef's value index by at least 5 percentage points, as measured by the Checkoff-funded Beef Tracker.

CS-V: Improve the Business and Political Climate of Beef

- By 2025, at least 75% of producers will agree that the beef industry is effectively addressing opportunities and challenges in a way that enhances the business climate for beef.
- By 2025, 20% of cow-calf producers have a written grazing managment plan.
- Ensure that salomonella is not listed as an adulterant.

CS-VI: Safeguard and Cultivate Investment in Beef Industry Research, Marketing and Innovation

- Increase national industry program funding for beef marketing, research and promotion efforts to \$100 million by 2025.
- Quantify the existing public research funding for beef industry production issues and grow that funding by 25% by 2025.
- · Preserve the existing Beef Checkoff.

anything but simplistic. It requires an understanding of both domestic and international markets and, in both cases, an educated understanding of what the remarkably diverse population of consumers want to know about our product. Additionally, consumers are increasingly interested in aligning their personal values with their food choices.

Given this introduction, I want to highlight the incredibly detailed process and extensive effort that is involved in the Beef Industry Long Range Plan (LRP). Every five years the Cattlemen's Beef Board, the Federation of State Beef Councils and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association come together to develop a strategic plan for the U.S. beef industry. The development for the current plan (2021-2025) was initiated in December 2019 when the officers of all three organizations selected 15 beef industry leaders to serve on a task force that would embark on the long-range planning process.

Ideally these LRPs provide direction for all the volunteer leadership work for the three organizations and, over time, are the building blocks for programs that advance our industry. Development of the long-range plan was conducted with the guidance of a professional facilitator and required the task force and staff to invest hundreds of hours of combined time in meetings, gathering current information from a myriad of professionals in the areas of consumer buying trends, global market trends, social media interventions, beef safety, competing proteins and many other issues likely to impact the beef industry over the next five years.

Early in this process it was important for the task force to codify in concise but meaningful words a strong mission statement for the U.S. beef industry. This task force elected to outline its long-term aspirations in a vision statement as well. The mission statement, which is a formal summary of the aims and values of the organization, is as follows: "Ensure the long-term prosperity of the U.S. beef industry by sustainably producing the most trusted, highest

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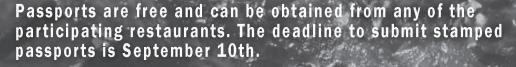
Nebraska Beef Council News

Recent Beef Checkoff Programs

1319 Central Ave PO Box 2108 Kearney, NE 68848 • (308)236-7551 • nebeef.org

Nebraska Beef Council Launches New Beef Passport Program

The Nebraska Beef Council has launched the Good Life Great Steaks Beef Passport program highlighting over 40 Nebraska restaurants that serve outstanding beef. The new program urges people to support their local participating restaurants where they can order beef menu items, earn stamps and be entered to win prizes. The top prize this year includes \$500 in beef and a Cabela's cooler.



For a complete list of details and to request your free passport visit www.GoodLifeGreatSteaks.org

- Order Beef
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- Win Prizes!





quality and consistently satisfying protein for consumers around the world."

While it may seem somewhat of a duplication, the vision statement should be an inspirational statement that expresses an idealistic future for our industry and our product. Due to an increasingly competitive protein market and growing global focus on sustainability, this task force constructed the following statement to represent a vision for the future of our industry: "To be the protein of choice around the world, trusted and respected for our commitment to quality, safety and sustainability."

In addition to these guiding statements, the task force chose to expand

on the previous LRP's single, measurable objective of growing beef demand and outlined four overarching industry objectives:

- Grow global demand for U.S. beef by promoting beef's health and nutritional benefits, satisfying flavor and unparalleled safety.
- Improve industry-wide profitability by expanding processing capacity and developing improved value-capture models.
- 3. Intensify efforts in researching, verifying, improving and communicating U.S. beef industry sustainability.
- 4. Make traceability a reality in the U.S. beef industry.

The task force conducted a very thorough analysis of the previous five years in the industry, which included many impactful events. U.S. Department of Agriculture data showed that the percentage of cattle grading Choice and Prime increased from approximately 74 percent in 2015 to more than 80 percent in 2019. There were significant increases in expenditures for beef. On the export front, in 2018, U.S. beef achieved an all-time export volume record of 1.35 million metric tons and experienced more than \$1 billion in value growth from a year earlier to a record \$8.33 billion.

Severe drought dramatically impacted the Australian beef industry and indicated a 25 percent reduction in their cowherd since 2012. China's estimated 32 million metric ton shortfall in pork supplies due to African Swine Fever were expected to offset some of the predicted 113 billion pounds of record production of beef, pork and poultry in 2020. At the turn of the decade, there were numerous threats on the horizon - the Green New Deal, concerns about greenhouse gas emissions related to beef production, and the production and promotion of alternative proteins, just to name a few.

While attempting to make projections into the future to create a comprehensive long-range plan for the industry is difficult under normal situ-









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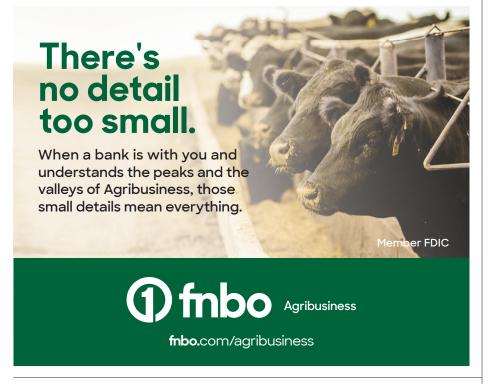
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ations, after just two face-to-face meetings in January and February, this task force was challenged with the turmoil created by COVID-19. Our industry had already experienced the disruption of a packing facility fire in Holcomb, Kan., and now a pandemic caused major changes in the food industry and beef supply chain. The feeding industry in

2020 was already experiencing the lowest return as a percentage of the wholesale beef dollar ever recorded, and the events of 2021 exacerbated the problem. This is a brief synopsis of the situation assessment, and with this background the task force created a list of key trends likely to impact the industry.



Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition & Nebraska Extension 2021 SUMMER GRAZING TOUR Come learn grazing strategies from local grass managers. Tuesday, June 15 Featuring the Niobrara, Neb., area with two Nebraska ranchers who manage very different grazing resources – Jessen Ranch & Kalkowski Family Ranch **Registration** — 7:30-8:30 a.m. at Jessen Ranch Located approximately 15 miles east of Niobrara on SR 12. Turn north on Co. Road 538. Follow tour signs approximately 5 miles NW to Jessen Ranch rock sign on right. Another 1 ½ miles to headquarters. Pre-registration required by Friday, June 4. Contact Ben Beckman, Neb. Beef Systems Extension Educator in the Cedar County office at 402-254-6821 or ben.beckman@unl.edu. \$25 per participant. Pay on site. For more information, contact Ron Bolze, NGLC Coordinator, at 402-321-0067. Brought to you by:

A summary of key trends included:

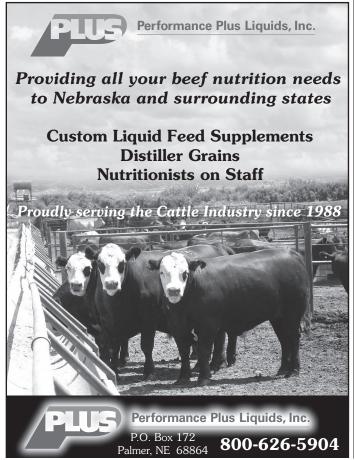
- Increased societal interest and focus on natural resources, climate change and the environment.
- A growing desire among consumers to know more about how cattle are raised and how beef is produced.
- Decreased packing capacity and hook space has created an imbalance in leverage, and is a deterrent to growth and expansion of the beef industry.
- Activism and the use of social media will continue to be used to influence consumer choices.
- There is a need for more timely market data (including live cash cattle and retail value of beef).
- There will be increased media coverage and investment in cell-cultured and plant-based protein.
- The safety of the U.S. beef supply will demand increased focus and attention by the industry.
- There is increased consumer desire for protein in their diet, and beef has an improving perception as a nutritious protein choice.

In addition to the mentioned key trends, the task force also identified a set of critical planning assumptions:

- There will be continued consumer interest in the environmental footprint, nutritional quality and healthfulness of the food they eat.
- Our livestock industry will continue to face opposition from animal/environmental activists.
- Poultry will remain our biggest competitor in the protein arena, and the largest growth opportunities for beef will be in the export markets.
- Consumers will increase their reliance on social media and digital resources to formulate their values and beliefs, which will influence their buying behavior and purchase decisions.
- The labor market will become more expensive and create constraints for agriculture, and government policy, trade policy and regulations will play a larger role in beef production.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30





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■■■ Legislative Update

By Ashley Kohls NC Vice President of Government Affairs





ith only a few weeks remaining in the first half of the 107th Nebraska Legislature, legislative bills (LB) designated as priority items by the Nebraska Cattlemen (NC) Legislative Committee for this session continue to advance through the legislative process. Below is a review of these designated priorities as well as an update on their statuses in the legislature.

Status of NC priority bills:

LB252 (Williams) "Dr. Fox bill" – LB252 was placed on consent calendar. This bill provides a 30-day window for livestock owners to refill valid prescriptions in the event their prescribing veterinarian unexpectedly passes away, allowing livestock owners an

opportunity to continue to provide for an animal's health, safety and welfare, while identifying a veterinarian to establish a new veterinarian-clientpatient-relationship. LB252 was signed into law by Gov. Pete Ricketts on April 14.

LB338 (Bostelman) Broadband – Prioritized by Sen. Bruce Bostelman. Changes provisions regarding broadband service and provides requirements for and change provisions relating to funding for rural broadband infrastructure by permitting the Nebraska Public Service Commission to consider community-based plans for the redirection of funding support in unserved and underserved areas. LB338 was signed into law by Gov. Pete Ricketts on May 5.

LB388 (Friesen) Broadband – Prioritized by Speaker Mike Hilgers. Creates

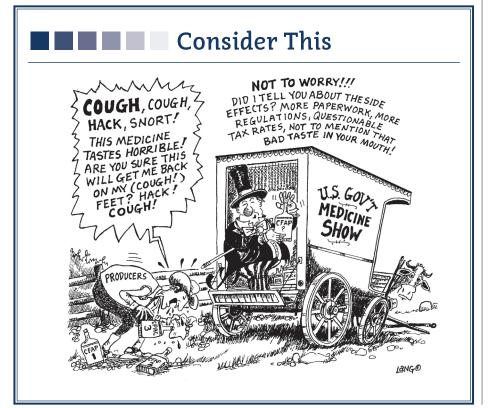
the Nebraska Broadband Bridge Act within the Public Service Commission and provides \$20 million in grants annually to increase access to high-speed broadband across the state. *LB388 advanced to select file on April 27.*

LB572 (Halloran) - Prioritized by the Agriculture Committee. LB572 advanced from committee with an amendment to remove the audit-based fee structure for registered feedlots, leaving their fee structure as it functions today and setting the per head inspection fee at \$0.85 until June 30, 2023, in order to reduce the Brand Committee's cash reserve. An amendment requiring legislative confirmation of the governor's appointees to the Brand Committee and implementation of an offense for purposefully tampering with electronic identifications was brought forward and adopted on general file. On select file, an amendment to conduct a study on the benefits and detriments of a voluntary system and the current mandatory system was brought forward. The study, as introduced, was to be presented to the Agriculture and Appropriation Committee by December 2021. A Floor Amendment to expand the length of the study was introduced to extend the study until December of 2022 to ensure a thorough study. Yet another amendment to have the study look at the benefits and detriments of making the entire state a brand inspection area was filed. During debate on Select File, an Elections and Rules (E&R) Committee "clean up" amendment was adopted, the three other amendments were withdrawn. LB572 advanced to final reading on May 10.

LB571 (Halloran) – Would establish a registered backgrounding lot program. LB571 did not advance out of committee.

LB396 (Brandt) Farm to School Bill

– Prioritized by the Speaker. Establishes a statewide Nebraska farm-to-school program providing a link between Nebraska farms and elementary and secondary public and nonpublic schools. During general file debate, this bill highlighted the Beef in Schools program and CONTINUED ON PAGE 30



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In addition to efforts regarding Nebraska Cattlemen's priority designated bills, NC leaders and staff have dedicated time toward advancing bills that would address property tax relief and reform.

LB2 (Briese) - Prioritized by Sen. Tom Briese. Would change the valuation of agricultural land and horticultural land for school bond purposes by lowering agriculture land valuations from 75 percent to 50 percent for school bond issues. LB2 advanced to final reading on April 28.

LB454 (Friesen) – Prioritized by Sen. Curt Friesen. Would adopt the School Property Tax Stabilization Act. This program would provide state funding to Nebraska school districts that currently receive little or no state funding, and therefore rely heavily or exclusively on local property taxpayers to fund their operations. After a long discussion

centering on the equity of Nebraska's system for funding K-12 schools, LB454 failed to advance with a vote of 23 Yes, 12 No, and a disappointing 14 Not

LR11CA (Erdman) - Would place before Nebraska voters a constitutional amendment to abolish the state's income, sales and property tax systems and replace them with a "consumption tax" on the sale of most new goods and services. After more than five hours of debate, LR11CA failed to advance with a vote of 23 Yes, 19 No, and 7 Not Voting.

LB132 (DeBoer) – Would create the School Financing Review Commission to study and prepare a report regarding school funding. LB132 advanced to select file with a vote of 37 Yes, 5 No and 6 Not Voting.

For questions regarding Nebraska Cattlemen priority items and any other bill on the agenda this session, please do not hesitate to contact Nebraska Cattlemen policy staff. • NG •

· The constraints in the packing industry will demand a look at new business models and an increase in hook capacity for growth in the industry.

With this background, the task force recommended six core strategies to achieve targeted industry objectives and outlined goals for each core strategy. Review all these core strategies in the graphic on page 22. I also encourage everyone to read and download the Beef Industry Long Range Plan at https://www.beeflongrangeplan.com. You will find a great number of graphs and slides that support and substantiate this plan's direction.

It is important to understand that this industry plan was voted on by the individual organizations and accepted as a road map for decision making through 2025. The volunteer committee members of all three organizations will be the industry leaders who decide on the tactics that make this plan become a reality for our industry. • NG •



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By Mike Boehm, Ph.D. Vice President for Agriculture, University of Nebraska, Harlan Vice Chancellor, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Nebraska-Lincoln



Taking Shape

reetings! In Nebraska, like many places, the disruptions we experienced throughout 2020 are beginning to wane, and we're seeing many aspects of life return to something that resembles normal. At both the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), we celebrated our graduates with in-person ceremonies. Our Extension team continues to offer many workshops, trainings and other resources remotely, while returning to the boots-on-the-ground work they do so well. Our researchers - faculty, staff and students - are in the field across the state, with hundreds of impactful projects underway.

In the March issue of Nebraska Cattleman, I wrote that throughout UNL's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), two themes were taking shape for 2021 - reconnection and innovation. Nearly halfway through the year, that holds true. We were thrilled to host U.S. Rep. Don Bacon (R-Neb.) at Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory (GSL) in April. Congressman Bacon met with area ranchers to learn more about agriculture, range management and conservation practices in the Sandhills. The next day, he toured GSL, where IANR faculty members shared information about the Sandhills' history and ecology, and exciting research initiatives occurring in precision livestock and range management at GSL. Rep. Bacon, who serves on the House Ag Committee, provided an overview of legislative priorities under the current administration. The message of the amazing conservation practice by Sandhills ranchers came through loud and clear.

Our students have been reengaging, too. The UNL Livestock Judging Team, under the leadership of Blaine French, has grown and improved the past few seasons. The Husker team wrapped up its spring 2021 season at the Blue Dragon Classic in Hutchinson, Kan., finishing as high team overall. Our Block and Bridle Club is gearing up to host the 101st National Block and Bridle Convention in 2022, and continues to be an invaluable leadership development and networking tool for so many of our undergraduate students. No doubt at least a few readers have fond memories and lifelong friends from their own time in these amazing organizations.

Our College of Agricultural Science and Natural Resource students, through these clubs and other on-campus experiences, learn the value of fostering friendships and connections with students and faculty across different majors and from varied backgrounds. I hope they continue to look for diversity of viewpoints and approaches as they tackle problems in their professional lives after graduation. This is something we try to do throughout IANR, and we have had a couple of unique opportunities to put this into practice in recent months.

This spring, Greg Ibach joined IANR as our first Under Secretary in Residence. Ibach is a former U.S. Department of Agriculture Under Secretary, as well as the longtime former director of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. His new role presents a great opportunity for IANR to strengthen existing relationships with state and federal partners and is an incredible resource for students to learn about ag policy on a wide range of issues with a

focus on conservation, profitability and ag biosecurity.

Earlier this year, we launched the Center for Agricultural Profitability. This new interdisciplinary center is housed within the UNL Department of Agricultural Economics, and also brings in faculty from disciplines such as biological systems engineering. Our ag econ department already has a large Extension component, and producers all across Nebraska and beyond take part in its seminars, workshops, webinars and other educational programs. This center will expand both research and outreach efforts in areas related to profitability and will develop tools to help farmers and ranchers make informed decisions as they consider technologies and management practices they could incorporate into their operations. The center will be up and running this summer.

You may remember that last year, we announced the new Center for Resilience in Agricultural Working Landscapes (CRAWL). The study of resilience seeks to measure how much disruption a landscape can withstand before it begins to shift into a different type of landscape. It also seeks to guarantee output, even under lessthan-ideal conditions. This center is officially operational, and, like the Center for Agricultural Profitability, has a large Extension component.

IANR faculty associated with the center will use the Barta Brothers Ranch near Long Pine to test different management practices and try to determine what unanticipated consequences those practices might have on the landscape. Faculty will work with our amazing Sandhills ranchers and other stakeholders to determine which management practices to study. You can learn more on the CRAWL website, at centerforresilience.unl.edu.

This summer will bring further opportunities for reconnection and innovation, and I look forward to keeping you updated. In the meantime, you can connect with me at *mboehm3@unl.edu.* • NG•

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Butch Foster 423.360.0434 Troy Lawson 540.430.0042



Safety Made Simple



afety is a well-regarded value in Nebraska's cattle industry. We regularly see operations prioritize the safety and health of their employees and witness the resulting positive outcomes. As a benefit to Nebraska Cattlemen members, the Nebraska Cattlemen Insurance Group (NCIG) offers loss control services and safety resources to those who partner with us on their risk management programs. We understand that creating a safe work environment is an ongoing process. By providing helpful resources, education and recommendations, we can support your safety goals.

The agriculture industry has its own safety requirements and processes. A one-size-fits-all safety-training provider may offer generic training that misses distinctive industry information. Having training specific to the work you do is important and more effective at contributing to your employees' safety.

NCIG has recently partnered with Safety Made Simple (SMS) to offer training specific to your industry. They are an online safety-training provider that develops courses specifically for the agriculture industry. Their catalog of courses includes transportation, maintenance and cattle feeding, just to highlight a few – all of which can be accessed on any internet-capable device. The courses are 15 to 20 minutes long and are designed to be relatable, easy to use and achieve the goal of sending people home safe.

Safety Made Simple Founder Chuck Pirie's approach and passion for safety was a contributing factor in our decision to partner with them. He shares that his fundamental belief is that "safety success is best achieved when there is a simple and clear message." We see this exhibited throughout their courses. You can preview their courses online at www.safetymadesimple.com/course-previews and learn more about them on their website.

Taylor Dutton, environmental, health, safety and security manager with Green Plains Cattle Company LLC, shares his experience with Safety Made Simple:

"Safety Made Simple has truly changed the game when it comes to agriculture safety training. Most safety platforms are just generic training to satisfy OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health Administration] requirements.

SMS has created a program that digs deeper and allows job-specific training to each department/position in the beef industry. Green Plains Cattle Company employees have really enjoyed this over what we have used in the past. From an admin standpoint, SMS is very customizable to suit everyone's needs. Being able to create groups and apply training to that specific group is tremendous. This saves time and gives you confidence that no one was left out. Also, the reporting side of the system is very simple, yet informative. Overall, SMS has done a great job at creating content and a platform that is much appreciated in the ag industry."

NCIG is excited to add Safety Made Simple to our safety resources. NCIG also offers loss control and claims management services to contribute to your overall safety goals. Our loss control team is available to review written safety policies and procedures and offer guidance for formulating and implementing cost-effective loss-prevention strategies. We're here for you to support your safety goals and to help Nebraska's beef producers return home safe each day.

About NCIG

NCIG was established as a partnership between Nebraska Cattlemen and FNIC (formerly The Harry A. Koch Co.), to provide you, Nebraska's beef producers, with risk management services specific to the work you do. This joint venture is a valuable benefit for current and new Nebraska Cattlemen members. With NCIG, you have access to a variety of leading carriers to provide a vast selection of products at competitive rates. Our team of licensed professionals provides support with claims, loss control, safety and compliance. You also have access to personal and employee health insurance options, including access to a direct primary care program powered by Strada Healthcare. Learn more at nebraskacattlemen.org/ ncig or by contacting Jeff Willis, NCIG director, at NCIG@necattlemen.org or (402) 861-7045.

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Clarification

We want to clarify our new name and brand is FNIC Trusted Insurance Advisors. We are not associated with FedNat Insurance Company in Florida. You may learn more about our rebrand at www. fnicgroup.com/rebrand-announcement.

established databases to help analyze drug and procedure protocols. Independent consulting nutritionists had been utilized by feedlots for years at this point, so the template for this business structure was already established.

Then, the FDA amended the animal drug regulations to implement the veterinary feed directive (VFD). A VFD drug is intended for use in animal feeds, and such use of the VFD drug is permitted only under the professional supervision of a licensed veterinarian. This veterinarian had to have a very close and on-site working relationship with producers. In order to buy feedgrade antibiotics, one had to have a prescription from a veterinarian. Hence, the recoupling of the veterinarian and the products happened to some degree, but this relationship would ultimately be challenged again.

Since the implementation of the VFD, veterinarians have become an even more integral part of producers' operations, both large and small. They

have usually established a very close personal relationship with the feedlot and ranch owners and employees, and to replace the veterinarian is usually a very stressful endeavor and one that can't be done overnight. Occasionally, this can happen at the busiest time of the year for producers. The passing of LB252 ensures that a producer's current prescriptions remain in place for 30 days after the death of a veterinarian, giving the feedlot/ranch time to interview and select a new member of their management team.

Many of these consulting veterinarians travel in routes in order to minimize travel times and to be efficient with their time management. They go north one week and south the next and so on. Therefore, it may be several weeks before a veterinarian can get to an area to be interviewed for a new consulting role. The passage of LB252 helps reduce the stress and the time constraints for this transition.



NC Foundation

By Renae Sieck, Martell 2020 Nebraska Cattlemen Beef State Scholarship Recipient

Identifying the Root of Inherited Cattle **Birth Defects**

he Nebraska Cattlemen Foundation Beef State Scholarship provides \$10,000 to graduate and upperlevel undergraduate students pursuing a beef industry-related career. This scholarship offers substantial tuition assistance to future beef industry leaders. The 2020 Nebraska Cattlemen Beef State Scholarship recipient is Renae Sieck. Following is her essay.

My passion for livestock genetics was initiated growing up in a family that raises beef cattle. In my time showing heifers in 4-H and FFA, my parents ensured I was a part of the mating decisions for my animals. Through this, I found I enjoyed looking at bull sale catalogs and learning about expected progeny differences.

This interest led me to major in animal science when I enrolled in college at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). I was hired as an intern with Neogen Genomics, where I got to further my experience with livestock genetic testing. After undergraduate graduation, I enrolled in a master's degree program in the UNL Animal Science Department with a focus on animal breeding and genetics. During this time. I was fortunate to be selected as the Nebraska Cattlemen Foundation Beef State Scholarship recipient. This scholarship has allowed me to continue in my master's program and focus on performing research that I hope will help the beef industry. In this article, I will describe some of the research I did as part of my master's degree program

where I worked to identify the root of an inherited cattle defect.

Geneticists are often asked, "Why is it important to track new variants in DNA?" For livestock producers, some of these new variants can affect the bottom line due to changes in cattle performance and even loss of life in calves. DNA mutations are new variants in the DNA of an animal that weren't found in the DNA of either of the animal's parents. These events are quite common in all animal and plant species; most of the new variants have minimal or no effect on animal performance. This is because they are often located between genes in the DNA or are in regions of the DNA with minimal or unknown biological function. However, due to random chance, occasionally these variants are located in DNA regions that have a substantial impact on animal development, resulting in the development of an inherited disease. Because of the random nature of these deleterious mutations, examples of inherited disease can be found in all livestock and companion animal species.

There are multiple ways an inherited disease can be passed on between generations. The specific type I study is called recessive inheritance. This means that to produce a calf affected by the disease, both the sire and dam of the affected calf must be a genetic carrier of the variant that causes the disease. Carriers of the genetic condition do not show any external signs of the disease themselves. Therefore, a disease-causing variant can be passed on for many generations before an affected calf is ever born. Propagation of the disease variant is sometimes accelerated in livestock species because reproductive technologies allow for one

animal to have a very large number of One of my research projects describes a syndrome in Hereford cattle characterized by abnormal development of the jaw and face. This syndrome results in calves that are unable to properly nurse and, therefore, fail to thrive. We CONTINUED)



call the condition Mandibulofacial Dysostosis (MD). I analyzed the pedigrees of the affected calves to discover that all affected calves had both maternal and paternal ties to one bull and that the disorder was recessively inherited.

To find the genetic variant that was causing this condition, I performed DNA sequencing with the affected calves and other related individuals. Sequencing allowed me to identify the bull that was the founder of the condition and other sires used via artificial insemination that were carriers of the condition. After finding the variant in the gene causing the condition, we worked with Neogen, a commercial genetics-testing lab, to develop a test for this disease. Our test allows for cattle producers to identify carrier animals in their herd so informed breeding decisions can be made to avoid producing affected calves.

For projects like this to be successful, it is vital that cattle producers report calves they suspect may have a developmental condition. Cattle breed associations work closely with university veterinary diagnostic and genetics labs to identify the roots of these issues and to develop tests that can be used to prevent affected calves. When researchers have a greater number of affected calves to evaluate, we can more efficiently identify the cause of the disease.

■■ Calendar

June

- 4-5 Cattlemen's Ball of Nebraska, Columbus
- 9-10 NC Midyear Meeting, Fremont
- 13 Northeast Nebraska Cattlemens Steak Fry, Wayne
- 15 NGLC & Neb. Extension
 Summer Grazing Tour, Niobrara
- 16-17 Sandhills Ranch Expo, Bassett
- 17-19 7 Triangle 7 AI Training, Akron, Colo.

- 8 West Central Golf and Meeting, Broken Bow
- 21 Sandhills Affiliate Golf and Meeting, Mullen
- 24 Cuming County Feeders Golf Tournament, Beemer
- 26 Bart County Cattlemen Beef Bash, Oakland

August

10-12 Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show, Nashville,

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NC in Action

Steak with Senators & Affiliate/Virtual Meetings

Steak with the Senators



Cuming County Feeders
Association members (left
to right) Pat Meiergerd
and Keith Kreikemeier;
and Young Nebraska
Cattlemen members
Boone Svobada, Heath
Keiser, Will Kreikmeier,
Evan Peterson, Grant
Jones, Sawyer Willrett,
Neleigh Anderson, Abby
Miller and Izzy McGibbon

grill for the inaugural NC Senator Social and Steak Event held near the Nebraska State Capitol in April. Key senate staff, state agency leadership, 41 of the 49 senators and University of Nebraska-Lincoln leadership joined NC Board members to connect and converse about current legislation and Nebraska's beef cattle industry. Thanks to the Cuming County Feeders Association for donating and grilling the steaks, and to Neogen for their continued support as an event sponsor.

Ogallala Affiliate Joined by Paxton FFA Chapter



Tanya Storer, Cherry
County Commissioner
(front row, far right), and
Melody Benjamin, NC
vice president of member
services (back row, far
right) are pictured with
the Paxton Consolidated
Schools FFA Chapter
during the Ogallala
Affiliate's Annual Meeting
April 12. Storer, Benjamin
and Joan Ervin, Keith
County commissioner,
spoke at the event.

Immigration "Fly In"



NC Vice President of Government Affairs Ashley Kohls (top row, second from left) participates in a virtual immigration reform "Fly In" meeting with William Payne (third row, center), chief counsel for Sen. Ben Sasse. Held March 24, the meeting focused on the need for positive immigration reform legislation that better serves NC members' needs.

Thayer County Hosts Appreciation Night



The Thayer County Livestock Feeders held their appreciation night March 13 at the Acreage Steakhouse in Hubble. Sadie Birky (right), alongside Marc Hanson (left), Thayer County Livestock Feeders president, is awarded a scholarship after presenting her winning essay. Tammy Johnson (not pictured) was presented with the Booster Appreciation Award.

New Beef Plant in North Platte



NC member Rusty Kemp introduces Sustainable Beef, LLC – a new beef packing plant being built in North Platte with 400,000-head annual harvest capacity. Ground breaking is planned for fall 2021. Also in attendance were NC Natural Resources and Environment Committee Vice Chairman Eric Hansen, NC Past President Tom Hansen and Lincoln County Cattlemen member Levi Fisher.







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*45 Replacement Heifers *14 Fall Calving Cows

*21 - Two -Yr Old Bulls

*12 Weaned heifer calves



Don't miss the annual August Feedlot issue or the 2021 Feedlot Directory - a listing of all NC Feedlot Council members.

Ad deadline: June 25.

September Marketing issue Ad deadline: July 25.



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